**Summary of the Evaluation Report on "Strengthening Citizen Participation on Critical Social Issues to Prevent Conflict"**

This project was conducted in partnership between Search for Common Ground (SFCG) and Ma'an Network, the local Palestinian News Agency, and aimed to strengthen the participation of Palestinian citizens in policymaking on critical social issues as well as strengthen constructive engagement between Palestinian civil society and local authorities.

In course of the project, the following measures were successfully implemented:

* the production of an interactive reality TV program (*The President)* which engaged Palestinian youth in a mock democratic process, reaching an estimated 750,000 Palestinians through TV and internet, and
* the convening of 47 town hall meetings with 1880 participants overall.

**The reality TV program *The President*** succeeded in engaging Palestinian youth in national politics, and it ignited a renewed interest in the political process.

* *The President* has seen a huge success among the Palestinian population, with 91.4% of the respondents reporting it as an innovative way to encourage political and social dialogue.
* 65% of the youth respondents reported that after watching *The President,* they believed that their participation in the democratic process can make a positive change.

**The town hall meetings** succeeded in strengthening the link between the Palestinian community and the political leaders by conducting a constructive dialogue between the two groups.

* 90% of the leaders who participated in the town hall meetings took the initiative to readdress at least one public issue identified by the community.
* A complete 100% of leaders that participated acknowledged the town hall meetings were an effective way to learn about the priorities of their citizens.

**Media as a tool for dialogue**

The new concept of using the reality TV format to enhance democratic practices by combining entertainment and political messaging to attract Palestinians has proven to be an innovative tool for youth engagement. Many youth after the program continued to engage in politics in some form, including taking on government positions. Similarly, the project demonstrated that town hall meetings, which were also broadcasted on TV, were an effective method to engage citizens and constructively improve their lives.